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United Nations Disarmament Information Programme

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report provides an overview of the activities of the United Nations Disarmament Information Programme carried out by the Department for Disarmament Affairs in the priority areas of weapons of mass destruction and conventional weapons, in particular small arms and light weapons. The Programme will continue to publish print and electronic versions of *The United Nations Disarmament Yearbook*, available on its website. The website (disarmament.un.org) has grown exponentially in content and is being used more and more by Member States, conference participants, non-governmental organizations and the general public alike to access daily updates of documents and statements, including United Nations webcasts. The Department will continue to facilitate the participation of civil society organizations in disarmament-related meetings and conferences and collaborate closely with coalitions of non-governmental organizations that spearhead such participation. The present report gives details of the many contributions of the Department of Public Information to the dissemination of information on disarmament.

* A/61/150 and Corr.1.

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I. Introduction

1. In resolution 59/103, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit to the Assembly at its sixty-first session a report covering the implementation of the activities of the United Nations Disarmament Information Programme by the United Nations system during the previous two years and the activities of the Programme contemplated for the following two years. The Programme is administered by the Department for Disarmament Affairs, in close collaboration with the Department of Public Information, in particular on information campaigns focused on major disarmament-related events and conferences.

2. The objectives of the Disarmament Information Programme reflect the overall orientation of the Department for Disarmament Affairs, guided by the priorities of Member States as enunciated in the resolutions and decisions of the General Assembly.

3. In the area of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems, especially nuclear weapons, high priority was accorded to the 2005 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and its preparatory process, requiring a heightened level of preparedness and mobilization of resources, both by the Department for Disarmament Affairs and the Department of Public Information. There was increased demand for information by the diplomatic community, other international and civil society organizations, the press and the public.

4. In the conventional weapons sphere, high priority was accorded to the United Nations Conference to Review Progress Made in the Implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, held in New York from 26 June to 7 July 2006, its Preparatory Committee, which met in New York from 9 to 20 January 2006, and the second Biennial Meeting of States to Consider the Implementation of the Programme of Action on Small Arms, held in New York from 11 to 15 July 2005. Again, in these cases, the Department for Disarmament Affairs and the Department of Public Information were required to mobilize resources to meet the demand for information from various sectors.

5. The importance of the website of the Department for Disarmament Affairs continued to grow, as evidenced by the substantial amount of time spent by visitors on the site. Dedicated websites were designed for the major disarmament-related conferences mentioned in paragraph 4, which were commended by delegations for their practical utility.

6. In accordance with paragraph 3 of resolution 59/93, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to prepare a report reviewing the results of the implementation of the recommendations of the United Nations study on disarmament and non-proliferation education (A/57/124) and to submit it to the Assembly at its sixty-first session. A separate report has been issued on this item (A/61/169).

7. In a series of resolutions adopted at its sixtieth session, the General Assembly reaffirmed the usefulness of the Department's three regional centres — in Africa, Asia and the Pacific, and Latin America and the Caribbean — in carrying out

dissemination and educational programmes. Separate reports to the General Assembly on the three regional centres provide further confirmation of their activities (A/61/137, A/61/163 and A/61/157).

8. The United Nations disarmament fellowship training and advisory services is the Department's largest annual training programme. A separate report on its activities has been submitted to the sixty-first session of the Assembly (A/61/130).

9. In accordance with the standing request of the General Assembly asking the Director of the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research to report to the Assembly on the activities of the Institute on a yearly basis, accounts of the information and education activities of the Institute for the last two years are contained in separate reports transmitted by the Secretary-General for consideration by the Assembly (A/60/135 and A/61/180).

10. Funding for the Disarmament Information Programme continues to be derived from the regular budget and from extrabudgetary resources, in particular from the Voluntary Trust Fund for the Programme. The status as at 31 December 2005 is contained in the annex to the present report. The Trust Fund continued to benefit from the generosity of Member States and private donors. The Department for Disarmament Affairs is grateful for the donations and support it has received from States and private donors, as listed in the annex to this report.

II. Information resources

A. Publication programme

11. *The United Nations Disarmament Yearbook* remains the flagship publication of the Department for Disarmament Affairs. The English version of the Yearbook is issued in a print run of 2,950 copies and distributed worldwide to United Nations libraries, as well as to its depositary library system, United Nations information centres, to all permanent missions in New York and Geneva (in multiple copies), to the offices of the regional commissions and to parliamentary libraries. It is sold in United Nations bookshops to subscribers and non-subscribers, with approximately 500 copies sold of each edition over its lifetime. An additional copy is distributed to all delegations participating in the work of the First Committee and the Conference on Disarmament. In addition, it is distributed to approximately 600 research institutes, organizations and individuals, mainly in the developing world.

12. Following on the results of the 2002/2003 survey carried out by the Department for Disarmament Affairs in cooperation with the Department of Public Information, the Department for Disarmament Affairs inaugurated its first online version of the *Yearbook*, the 2004 edition, together with the 2002 and 2003 archival editions. The *e-Yearbook* is in html format and features full-text search, index search and navigation mechanisms and is easily accessible from the Department for Disarmament Affairs website.

13. The Programme continued to publish its dark-blue covered study series, in all six languages. The series, a non-sales publication, produced in small quantities in a serial format, highlights General Assembly studies undertaken by groups of governmental experts by packaging them in an attractive form for wider dissemination and future use. In 2005, study series 31 was released on the theme

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"The relationship between disarmament and development in the current international context". Plans have been made to publish the study on verification in all its aspects, including the role of the United Nations in the field of verification, which will be presented to the General Assembly at its sixty-first session.

14. The occasional papers series was developed to give wider dissemination to the expert inputs from panels and seminars sponsored by the Department for Disarmament Affairs at Headquarters. The publication is produced in English only, disseminated free of charge and posted on the Department's website. The following three have been issued:

- *Occasional Paper*, No. 8, October 2004, "Disarmament and non-proliferation regimes", a contribution of the Secretary-General's Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters to the High-Level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change
- *Occasional Paper*, No. 9, November 2004, "The relationship between disarmament and development", based on a panel discussion held during the first session of the group of experts on the subject in March 2004
- *Occasional Paper*, No. 10, March 2006, "Verifying non-proliferation and disarmament agreements today", based on a panel discussion organized by the Department in October 2005

15. In 2004, the Department for Disarmament Affairs discontinued its printed version of the update. In 2005, it produced one version (February issue) of the update in electronic format, but owing to lack of resources did not produce any more that year. In 2006, the Programme revamped its format, creating a new electronic-only format entitled "Disarmament update: news links". The one-page e-publication is aimed at the interested public and highlights recent events and activities of the Department, linking the reader to fuller stories already available on the Department's website. Four issues are planned each year.

16. In 2004, the Department for Disarmament Affairs published a booklet entitled "Reducing the threat of biological weapons", containing excerpts from the panel discussions held in New York in cooperation with the Non-Governmental Organizations Committee on Disarmament, Peace and Security, between 2000 and 2003.

17. Following the successful conclusion in January 2005 of the small arms education project, organized by the Department for Disarmament Affairs in partnership with the Campaign for Global Peace Education of the Hague Appeal for Peace, the publication "*Peace and Disarmament Education: Changing Mindsets to Reduce Violence and Sustain the Removal of Small Arms*" was issued in 2005; it is available in print and electronic format and contains most notably reports from the four pilot education projects in Albania, Cambodia, Niger and Peru and an "organizers manual" to serve as a guide for the replication of projects in other locations.

18. To assist delegations in their analysis of the resolutions and decisions on disarmament adopted at the previous year's General Assembly, the Department for Disarmament Affairs publishes in print and electronic format, at the beginning of each year, in limited quantities, the final edited texts of the resolutions, including voting patterns and sponsors, as well as unedited texts of the decisions.

B. Website

19. The Department for Disarmament Affairs continued to maintain and improve both the substantive content and technical delivery of its website.

20. The overall design of the website remains oriented towards specific issues. The priorities of the Department determine its core content. Its front page provides the latest disarmament-related United Nations press releases, statements of the Secretary-General and other senior United Nations officials, information on current and upcoming events in the field of disarmament, relevant background documentation and links to significant United Nations partners. Its substantive pages give background information on the topic being explored and store a wealth of information on recent and past major disarmament-related conferences. Documentation relating to these conferences that exists in all official United Nations languages is posted on the website.

21. The Department for Disarmament Affairs designed a specialized website for the 2005 NPT Review Conference as a working tool for participants in the Conference. The web pages were cited for their usefulness by delegations and are referred to in the final report of the Conference.[7] A similar concept was used to build the website for the 2006 Conference to Review Progress Made in the Implementation of the Programme of Action on Small Arms and its Preparatory Committee. Given the public interest, a new component was added to the website devoted to the Review Conference. It featured a public service announcement by Michael Douglas in his capacity as a United Nations Messenger of Peace (see para. 31 (c)), as well as frequently asked questions and a more direct response to open criticism of the Conference's objectives in the form of a "Setting the record straight". Other items of general public interest were also added. Thus the website served as a tool for participants in the Conference, for general informational purposes and to respond to misconceptions about the Conference's objectives.

22. Access to the Department for Disarmament Affairs *e-Yearbook* is controlled by the newly developed security system, which requires users to log in to the website, so as to allow the Department to more accurately report on public interest in the publication and to access the certain segments of the website. The new security system provides additional level of flexibility and control over access to various sections of the website. The Department conducted a feasibility study on the issue of electronic submission of reports by Member States to the Register of Conventional Arms and recommended that the new security system be used for the development of a custom web application to facilitate electronic submissions.

23. The Department is continuing to monitor the performance of its website. Statistics on the number of hits and visitors, their favourite pages and peak hours and the days or weeks the website is accessed are kept monthly. Regular monitoring has improved the Department's understanding of the kind of information that is being sought, and who is seeking it.

24. During the reporting period, in addition to the common website metrics, the Department for Disarmament Affairs has begun to monitor session time for visitors (total time spent on the website) and the cumulative session time of individual users. This new indicator revealed that, while the number of visitors had grown moderately during this period, the amount of time those visitors had spent visiting the website showed notable growth. Among the users that spent the most time visiting the

website are Government agencies (generally, ministries of foreign affairs), educational institutions and non-governmental organizations. The top 10 users, by time spent on the website, have clocked an average of about 30 hours per month accessing pages on the website.

25. Expanding the multilingual version of the Department for Disarmament Affairs website continues to prove to be a major challenge. It is only when documentation exists in all United Nations official languages that the Department is able to post it quickly and easily. With respect to the 2005 NPT Review Conference and the 2006 Conference to Review Progress Made in the Implementation of the Programme of Action on Small Arms, due to available funding, the Department for Disarmament Affairs maintained the English version of the websites, while the Department of Public Information created and maintained websites in the five other United Nations official languages.

C. Exhibits

26. Exhibits play an important role in promoting advocacy and providing information on a conference so as to give vibrancy to a parliamentary process, through the use of new formats and multimedia for the presentation of data and the promotion of governmental and non-governmental positions. Such exhibits have become an expected fixture of major United Nations conferences.

27. An exhibit sponsored by Hidankyo, a Japan-based non-governmental organization (NGO) composed of survivors from Hiroshima and Nagasaki, was featured at the 2005 NPT Review Conference. Hidankyo highlighted the stories of the survivors, many of whom have endured severe illness throughout their lives and have found their numbers dwindling further with each passing year. Ageing survivors attended in great numbers and were featured speakers at side events. It was noted that, in light of their advanced years and health conditions, it was for many their last opportunity to stand present at an NPT Review Conference as testimony to the horror of the use of nuclear weapons.

28. In conjunction with the 2006 Conference to Review Progress Made in the Implementation of the Programme of Action on Small Arms, displays were mounted by the United States of America, the Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean, the United Nations Development Programme, the Economic Community of West African States, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the Small Arms Survey, the Bonn International Centre for Conversion, the International Action Network on Small Arms (IANSA), the Control Arms campaign, SaferAfrica, Saferworld and the World Forum on the Future of Sport Shooting Activities.

29. In addition, the Department of Public Information mounted, in cooperation with the Department for Disarmament Affairs, an exhibit in the visitors' lobby, which included small replicas of the non-violence sculpture by Carl Frederik Reutersward, creator of the twisted gun on display at the visitors entrance; an *escopetarra* (from *escopeta* (rifle), and *guitarra* (guitar)) made from confiscated illicit rifles by César Lopez, a Colombian musician, who, with the support of IANSA, performed on the gun-guitar at the opening of the exhibit in New York; and sculptures from an exhibition presented by the 3-D design students in the

Advertising and Graphic Design Department of the New York School of Visual Arts, entitled "Disarm ... new year, new use", which displayed M-16 rifles transformed into everyday objects as a call for peace. In connection with the *escopetarra*, the United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime, which sponsored the conversion into guitars of 15 AK-47's used in Colombian violence, gave the United Nations one of the *escopetarras*, which will be on display in the disarmament section of the visitors guided tour route.

III. Information activities

A. Panel discussion

30. The Department for Disarmament Affairs held a panel discussion in November 2005 on the issue of verification in all its aspects, including the role of the United Nations, as a contribution to the panel of experts to be established by the Secretary-General in 2006 on the issue. The presentations made by four well-known individuals in the field of verification were published in Department for Disarmament Affairs *Occasional Papers*, No. 10.

B. Activities of the Secretary-General's Messenger of Peace

31. Over the last two years, Michael Douglas, a Messenger of Peace since 30 July 1998, has continued to use his celebrity status to attract attention to the issue of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, as well as the impact of illicit small arms proliferation. The Department of Public Information is the lead office for the activities of the Messengers of Peace and acts in cooperation with the substantive office (in this case the Department for Disarmament Affairs) for activities relating to disarmament issues. During the period under review, Mr. Douglas has made the following important contributions:

(a) In 2005, the United Nations Postal Administration created a stamp devoted to the subject of children affected by armed conflict, entitled "Books, not guns". In connection with the release of the stamp, Mr. Douglas made a 30-second video that was shown by the United Nations at a first-day issue ceremony on 15 October 2004 as part of an annual philatelic mega-event in New York. The short video was also shown to the participants in the First Committee a week later.

(b) On 21 September 2005, Mr. Douglas participated, together with several other Messengers, in a full day of activities to commemorate the International Day of Peace. It included attending the annual Peace Bell ceremony with the Secretary-General and the President of the General Assembly; a student observance attended by more than 400 students and featuring, among others, a video conference from Israel and Palestine and Northern Ireland; meetings and briefings with senior Secretariat officials; and a press conference focused on aspects of the reform measures adopted by the 2005 World Summit.

(c) In May 2006, Mr. Douglas featured in a public service announcement, spotlighting the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons and promoting the 2006 Conference to Review Progress Made in the Implementation of the Programme of Action on Small Arms. The public service announcement was translated into over a

dozen languages and sent around the globe through Department of Public Information networks. It was displayed on the website devoted to the 2006 Conference.

C. Briefings

32. At the request of the Public Inquiries Unit of the Department of Public Information, staff members of the Department for Disarmament Affairs undertook between 30 and 35 briefing engagements per year for the benefit of: (a) student visitors in the framework of university programmes dealing with the United Nations; (b) United Nations Associations members from various countries; (c) foreign ministry trainees; (d) students preparing for the model United Nations exercises; and (e) visiting members of NGOs.

33. Staff members of the Department for Disarmament Affairs also participated in numerous discussions as panellists and participants on arms control, disarmament and security issues organized by research or university-related institutes or think-tanks.

IV. Cooperation with civil society, especially non-governmental organizations

34. The Department for Disarmament Affairs maintained close contact for the purpose of coordinating participation in major conferences with two major NGO coalitions, Reaching Critical Will in the nuclear field, and IANSA in connection with small arms and light weapons. NGO access to meetings included addressing delegations in a dedicated open session of the following conferences: the 2005 NPT Review Conference; the 2005 Biennial Meeting of States to Consider the Implementation of the Programme of Action on Small Arms; the Preparatory Committee for the Conference to Review Progress made in the Implementation of the Programme of Action on Small Arms; and the Review Conference itself.

35. At the sixtieth session of the First Committee, two prominent educators from the NGO sector were invited, for the first time, at the initiative of the Chairman, to make presentations on nuclear and small arms education to the Committee during its interactive debate, held on 21 October 2005, on disarmament and non-proliferation education.[2]

36. The Department continued to cooperate with the NGO Committee on Disarmament and the Department of Public Information in facilitating panel discussions covering a range of topical issues in the fall of 2004 and 2005 during Disarmament Week. Similar programmes are planned for the next two years.

V. Activities of the Department of Public Information

A. Public information campaigns

37. The Department of Public Information has continued its efforts to help raise public awareness and understanding of the work of the United Nations in the field of disarmament and related issues. During the reporting period, the Department of Public Information focused on the promotion and coverage of major conferences in the area of nuclear weapons and the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons; in the nuclear field, the 2005 NPT Review Conference and the 2005 Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty held on 22 and 23 September 2005; in the conventional field, the second Biennial Meeting of States to Consider the Implementation of the Programme of Action on Small Arms as well as the 2006 Review Conference of the Programme of Action on Small Arms.

38. With respect to the latter, the Department of Public Information worked closely with the Department for Disarmament Affairs on the development and implementation of a comprehensive communications strategy. The strategy aimed at utilizing a full range of the information and communications tools available to the Department of Public Information in all official languages. This included issuing press releases and other media and promotional material for print media, radio and television; developing a multifaceted website; outreach; and special projects undertaken both at Headquarters and through the worldwide network of information centres to call attention to the dangers associated with the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons; and to raise awareness among the world's public of the progress made by the Organization and its Member States in the implementation of the Programme of Action on Small Arms.

B. Radio and television

39. United Nations Television highlighted disarmament-related issues through its various products. During the reporting period, "World Chronicle", a television programme produced by the Department of Public Information in a talk show format, featured senior Government representatives from Member States and United Nations officials on such issues as nuclear non-proliferation, small arms and light weapons and mine action. UN in Action, a six-language television feature series, which is estimated to reach some 300 million viewers on a weekly basis, most recently produced, in close collaboration with the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean of the Department for Disarmament Affairs, a programme entitled "Brazil combats illegal arms trafficking" which was broadcast by CNN World Report in July 2006. The UN in Action series also continued to highlight disarmament and demobilization programmes in the context of United Nations peacekeeping, peacebuilding and reconciliation efforts, such as the 2005 story on small arms and light weapons called "Surviving rebel abduction in Uganda". UNIFEED, the daily satellite feed which reaches some 560 television stations around the world through the Associated Press Television News agency, produced and distributed various stories on such topics as the problem of small arms in the Great Lakes region in Africa, news on the 2006 Review Conference of the Programme of Action on Small

Arms and the disarmament related promotional work of the Messenger of Peace, Michael Douglas.

40. United Nations Radio produced a wealth of programmes on disarmament and related issues in the six official languages, as well as in Portuguese and Kiswahili. These daily live broadcasts and current affairs magazine programmes, which are aired around the world by United Nations Radio's broadcast partners, provided thorough coverage of intergovernmental conferences and meetings, from the 2005 NPT Review Conference to the 2006 Review Conference of the Programme of Action on Small Arms and meetings of the Disarmament Commission. Significant events such as the Nobel Prize being awarded to the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) were also covered, as were special projects and other activities in the field of disarmament and related activities around the world.

41. For example, the English Language Unit of United Nations Radio produced 45 disarmament-related stories during the reporting period, ranging from highlights of major United Nations conferences and meetings to the developments relating to the nuclear programme of the Islamic Republic of Iran. The Chinese Language Unit programmes focused, among other things, on non-proliferation, small arms and the 2005 World Summit Outcome. It also produced a number of special features, such as one relating to the exhibition on the theme "Turning swords into ploughs". The Russian Language Unit produced feature stories exploring subjects such as the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction and the related obligations of the Russian Federation as its signatory; a look at different points of view on the question of nuclear non-proliferation; former President Mikhail Gorbachev's reflections on the 2005 NPT Review Conference outcome; and the efficacy of efforts to date to clear unexploded ordnance and abandoned ammunition. The Spanish Language Unit produced stories on disarmament, including a series of programmes on a wide range of topics such as reactions towards an impasse in multilateral disarmament discussions and issues relating to nuclear testing and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. Among programmes produced by the French Language Unit were those on small arms trafficking, biological weapons and disarmament projects in Côte d'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Guatemala, Rwanda and Uganda. The Arabic Language Unit's programmes highlighted dangers and problems associated with the illegal trade in small arms and light weapons, non-proliferation issues and the 2005 Nobel Peace Prize awarded to the IAEA and its Director General. The Kiswahili Language Unit's features and news ranged from discussions of small arms and light weapons in Africa to coverage of statements by the Secretary-General on nuclear proliferation and other disarmament-related issues. The Portuguese Language Unit produced programmes on disarmament efforts in specific countries such as Afghanistan, Brazil, Colombia and Côte d'Ivoire. It also covered the project to encourage disarmament in Haiti, whereby guns were exchanged for tickets to a football (soccer) game between Brazil's national team and the Haitian squad. Other programmes looked at disarmament and children, and disarmament and development.

C. Internet

42. The United Nations News Centre web portal devoted over 300 news stories to developments and issues related to disarmament and non-proliferation during the

two-year period. Disarmament within the context of United Nations peacekeeping operations featured in some 100 stories, 60 stories addressed issues pertaining specifically to small arms. In addition to regular distribution to more than 40,000 subscribers in English and French, the News Centre is one of the most heavily visited areas of the United Nations website. With its stories being a subject of significant media pickup around the world, the Centre has become an effective instrument for re-dissemination as well as an important direct source of information.

43. The Department of Public Information continued to maintain the global issues disarmament web page, a comprehensive hub of up-to-date information with links to material across the United Nations system (www.un.org/issues/m-disarm.html). In addition, during the reporting period, the Department of Public Information designed and developed the following disarmament-related websites: the United Nations Conference to Review Progress Made in the Implementation of the Programme of Action on Small Arms (www.un.org/events/smallarms2006/index.html) and its Preparatory Committee (www.un.org/events/smallarms2006/prepcom/); the Second Biennial Meeting of States to Consider the Implementation of the Programme of Action on Small Arms (www.un.org/events/smallarms2005); the 2005 NPT Review Conference (www.un.org/events/npt2005/). Furthermore, in connection with the launch at the United Nations on 1 June 2006 of the report of the international independent Weapons of Mass Destruction Commission entitled "*Weapons of terror: freeing the world of nuclear, biological and chemical arms*", the Department of Public Information created a website with a link to the press conference given by Hans Blix, Chair of the Commission, and to the Weapons of Mass Destruction Commission website itself (www.un.org/terrorism/wmdcreport/).

44. Another web-based resource to raise awareness on global disarmament efforts has been the webcasting technology of the Department of Public Information, by which television coverage of intergovernmental meetings and press conferences on disarmament are posted for live and on-demand Internet viewing. During the reporting period, some 30 webcasts allowed global access to proceedings of the meetings of the General Assembly, the Security Council and other intergovernmental bodies, including the two major disarmament-related meetings mentioned above; comments made by officials at media stakeouts at United Nations Headquarters; and special events and press conferences.

D. Printed materials

45. The Department of Public Information produced extensive meetings coverage on disarmament-related topics, issuing a total of 376 press releases on the subject, 194 of them in English and 182 in French. These ranged from backgrounders to summaries of intergovernmental meetings, reviews and negotiations; and from statements of the Secretary-General and his Spokesman to reports of press conferences. The press releases were distributed in hard copy and posted electronically on the United Nations website for global access.

46. In addition to press materials, the Department of Public Information promoted awareness of disarmament through the following regular and ad hoc publications:

(a) The *UN Chronicle*, published in print in all six United Nations official languages and disseminated in English and French online and by means of the *UN Chronicle* feature service. The *Chronicle* regularly produces articles on

disarmament, including weapons of mass destruction and small arms. In the first quarterly issue each year, it provides comprehensive coverage of the First Committee. During the reporting period, the magazine also featured articles on disarmament, including "Combating biological weapons" by Michael Crowley (Issue 2, 2002), "The road to Iraq's disarmament" by Liz Willmott (Issue 1, 2003), "Certainly as dangerous as a cigarette" by Luis Alfonso de Alba (Issue 2, 2003), "Commitment to the global ban on chemical weapons" by Rogelio Pfirter, "The success of the Anti-Personnel Mine-Ban Convention" by Jean Lint (Issue 3, 2003);

(b) *Yearbook of the United Nations*;

(c) New editions of two booklets, *UN in Brief* (in print and online) and *Image and Reality* (online only);

(d) Completely updated 2004 edition of the popular *Basic Facts about the United Nations*, containing a section covering the full range of disarmament issues and the role of the United Nations in this field;

(e) A consolidated publication containing selected United Nations documents on small arms and light weapons produced in cooperation with the Department for Disarmament Affairs, in preparation for the work of the open-ended working group on tracing illicit small arms and light weapons.

E. Civil society and non-governmental organizations

47. The Department of Public Information organized its 58th annual Department of Public Information/NGO Conference, on the theme "Our challenge: voices for peace, partnerships and renewal", with the participation of approximately 1,800 NGO representatives and civil society organizations from 86 countries, representing some 700 organizations. United Nations and Government officials and parliamentarians also participated. During the Conference, a variety of issues relating to international peace, security and disarmament were widely discussed. The midday NGO interactive workshop and multi-stakeholder dialogue also covered those issues. One workshop dealing with disarmament was entitled "Two paths to a culture of peace: nuclear disarmament and the International Day of Peace".

48. During the reporting period, weekly briefings organized by the Department of Public Information for NGO representatives, with regular attendance of about 220 persons, featured specific programmes on the following disarmament-related issues:

- Weapons of mass destruction: the challenges of non-proliferation and disarmament (21 October 2004)
- Preserving outer space for peaceful purposes (20 October 2005)
- Preview of the 2006 United Nations Conference to Review Progress Made in the Implementation of the Programme of Action on Small Arms (8 June 2006, with the participation of the President-designate of the Conference)

F. Public affairs

49. During the reporting period the Group Programmes Unit of the Department of Public Information organized 47 in-house briefings on disarmament-related issues

for visitors. The Department for Disarmament Affairs participated in the 2005 and 2006 training of Department of Public Information tour guides. The guides are updated on the disarmament-related issues as needed as part of their daily morning briefings.

50. The Department of Public Information worked with the Department for Disarmament Affairs to design and produce a special small arms related exhibition, which was on display in the visitors lobby during the 2006 Review Conference of the Programme of Action on Small Arms. In addition, the Department of Public Information continued to maintain and periodically upgrade the permanent exhibition on the theme "Disarmament: peace through security", which is part of the tour route at United Nations Headquarters. The exhibit includes displays on Hiroshima and Nagasaki and small arms, landmines and chemical and biological weapons. The display is viewed by almost 500,000 visitors per year, bringing its total audience to an estimated 3 million since it was opened in 2000.

G. United Nations information centres, services and offices

51. A number of United Nations information centres, services and offices worldwide initiated and carried out various public information activities in the field of disarmament and arms control, including press and promotional material, workshops, special events, lectures and other programmes.

VI. Conclusions

52. **During the period under review, the United Nations Disarmament Information Programme continued to focus its activities on information in the field of weapons of mass destruction, especially nuclear weapons, and on the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons.**

53. **Responding to the higher levels of computer literacy and technological capability among its constituents around the globe, the Disarmament Information Programme is orienting its publications to electronic formats. The *Disarmament Yearbook*, the *Occasional Papers* series and "Disarmament Update: News Links" are available on the website of the Department for Disarmament Affairs.**

54. **The website has expanded exponentially in content and specialized web pages have been developed for major conferences, which serve as working tools for participants and vectors of public information. The Department for Disarmament Affairs will continue to improve the website to provide current and accurate information in a dynamic format.**

55. **The Department of Public Information has highlighted disarmament and arms control issues of topical interest, especially nuclear weapons and small arms and light weapons, in print, on the Internet and in film, television and radio, using its large network of Information Centres around the world and its outreach capacity. Its use of the celebrity appeal of the Messenger of Peace in respect of arms control issues has been highly effective. With respect to the 2005 NPT Review Conference and the 2006 Conference to Review Progress Made in the Implementation of the Programme of Action on Small Arms, the**

Department of Public Information, in close cooperation with the Department for Disarmament Affairs, has mounted successful information strategies and campaigns, which have helped to clarify messages for public consumption about the issues under consideration by the conferences and the United Nations objectives attached to them.

56. **The Department for Disarmament Affairs is grateful for the support it has received from Governments for the Voluntary Trust Fund for the United Nations Disarmament Information Programme and appeals for continued support for its work. It would like to express appreciation in particular to Canada, the Czech Republic, Mexico, Panama, the Republic of Korea and Thailand for their financial contributions to the Trust Fund.**

Notes

[1] NPT/CONF.2005/57 (Part I), para. 35.

[2] Kathleen Sullivan, Coordinator of the Nuclear Weapons Education and Action Project of Educators for Social Responsibility in New York, shared her views on the guiding principles of disarmament and non-proliferation education in the United Nations study on the subject and conducted a classroom demonstration of the firepower of the current nuclear arsenals. Peter Lucas, John W. Draper Master's Program in Humanities and Social Thought at New York University, introduced a detailed curriculum on small arms and human rights created by teachers in training, aimed at high school and early university students.

[3] Projects during the period under review were reported by offices in Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belgium, Bolivia, Brazil, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Colombia, France, Germany, Ghana, India, Indonesia, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Lebanon, Mexico, Morocco, Nepal, Pakistan, Panama, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, the Russian Federation, South Africa, the United Republic of Tanzania, Thailand, Togo, Turkey, Yemen and Zimbabwe.

Annex

Status of the Voluntary Trust Fund for the United Nations Disarmament Information Programme

(United States dollars)

I.	Fund balance as at 1 January 2004	472 480
II.	Income	
	1 January 2004-31 December 2005	
	Voluntary contributions[a]	74 497
	Interest income	17 036
	Miscellaneous income	44 136
	Subtotal	**135 669**
III.	Expenditures	
	1 January 2004-31 December 2005	255 485
	Programme support	32 821
	Prior period adjustments	1 678
	Subtotal	**289 984**
IV.	Fund balance as at 31 December 2005	318 165

Source: based on the statement of income and expenditure for the biennium 2004-2005 ending 31 December 2005. During the period 1 January to 30 June 2006, additional contributions of $7,965 have been received from Canada ($6,965) and Thailand ($1,000).

[a] 2004: Private donor ($46,000), Czech Republic ($4,497), Mexico ($5,000), Panama ($1,000), Republic of Korea ($5,000) and Thailand ($1,000); 2005: Mexico ($5,000), Panama ($1,000), Republic of Korea ($5,000) and Thailand ($1,000).